

## Major MRAC Events

- 1917 - January—The Milwaukee Radio Amateurs' Club was formed by Loy Schell Hillegas-Baird 9HO, A. C. Kletzsch Jr., J. B. Hitz, and Alonzo Pawling.
- 1919 - MRAC became affiliated with the ARRL (December 5). Request letter was sent October 24, 1919. MRAC was among the first group affiliated.
- 1922 - MRAC starts its first code and radio building classes. Over the previous 5 years, a number of Milwaukee area radio clubs go out of business with their memberships absorbed by MRAC..
- 1924 - The Milwaukee Journal started a column in their newspaper called "HamChatter".
- 1925 - MRAC starts its own newsletter following the format of a small magazine. The publication is called the Badger ARRL News. Hams from all across the country joined the club to receive the 'News.
- 1926 - MRAC has members in all 48 states due to the popularity of the "Badger ARRL News" newsletter.
- 1926 - MRAC sponsors the "Badger Ham Roundup" on June 12. Most activities take place at the Journal Building with a luncheon at Gimbels Grill Room and banquet at the Hotel Maryland (4<sup>th</sup> and Sycamore St). \$2 admission covers everything except the luncheon.
- 1928 - MRAC sponsors the first ARRL Central Division Convention at the Milwaukee Republican Hotel, Friday thru Sunday, May 25 – 27.
- 1931 - The Milwaukee Journal ends "HamChatter" in the newspaper. However, they granted the club time to broadcast information over WTMJ-AM radio.
- 1939 - The 16<sup>th</sup> annual MRAC sponsored "QSO Party" at the Milwaukee Athletic Club had over 300 Wisconsin hams in attendance.
- 1940 - MRAC sponsors the Wisconsin ARRL Convention at the Schroeder Hotel (June 15,16).
- 1941 - With a number of members going into the armed forces due to the war, MRAC members still in Milwaukee record a series of 78 rpm records to send audible greetings to members overseas.
- 1942 - MRAC members start the War Emergency Radio Service in Milwaukee. Stations required a special license to operate on 2 1/2 meters with a maximum input power of 25 watts. Stations were located at all city of Milwaukee Police stations.
- 1947 - MRAC applies for its first club call. W9HRM, from deceased member Erwin Kreis.
- 1948 - MRAC sponsors the ARRL National Convention at the Milwaukee Auditorium (September 4-6) resulting in an \$8000 profit (equivalent to \$64,829.88 in 2005 dollars or \$73,525.84 in 2007 dollars or \$74,668.55 in 2011 dollars)! The convention includes welcoming speeches by then Milwaukee Mayor Frank Zeidler and Wisconsin Governor Oscar Rennebohm.
- 1949 - MRAC's Jack Doyle W9GPI begins a two year term as ARRL Central Division Director
- 1950 - MRAC purchases an International Harvester "Metro" truck for portable radio communications. The truck was distinctively marked with the clubs call, W9HRM (at the time). There were 2 complete operating positions with equipment by Collins, National and Harvey-Wells. There was also a Motorola receiver crystaled for Milwaukee Police frequencies. The truck towed a matching trailer with a 2.5 KW generator.
- 1950 - Harry Paston W9DJV, editor of the MRAC newsletter "*Hamateur Chatter*" resigns his position to move to Connecticut to become Assistant Secretary of ARRL.
- 1951 - MRAC installs Civil Defense amateur radio stations in area police departments and some fire departments. This was similar to the War Emergency Radio Service installations during World War II.
- 1952 - The cover of the May 1952 Issue (Special Mobile Issue) of CQ magazine features the MRAC van. A one column story appears on page 80 (as written by Charlie Kaetel W9SNK).

- 1957 - MRAC's very own Jack Doyle W9GPI begins another term as ARRL Central Division Director (having previously served from 1949-1951). He will serve 2 more terms until 1963.
- 1959 - MRAC Sponsored the Wisconsin QSO Party
- 1966 - MRAC receives a donation from WISN-AM of their old 5000 watt AM transmitter. The transmitter will eventually be sold to another broadcast station with the proceeds going to Milwaukee ARES.
- 1966 - Amateur Radio Emergency Corps Inc is formed as a tax exempt corporation to receive donations and own equipment. The entire board will consist of MRAC members.
- 1967 - MRAC sponsors its second Central Division ARRL Convention. The West Allis and Menomonee Falls clubs join with us to help at the convention. Advance sale tickets are \$5.50 and include convention entry and banquet. The club made a profit of \$170 (their share of the total profit).
- 1968 - MRAC (in conjunction with the West Allis, Ozaukee, and Menomonee Falls clubs and AREC) operates a demonstration station at the then fledgling Summerfest. The tent housing the station blew down during severe winds causing some damage, but a new tent was erected and a station was put back on the air.
- 1968 - MRAC applied to the FCC for a new club call of W9RH (from W9HRM) call formally held by Emil Felber (recently deceased).
- 1968 - The Milwaukee-Florida net is formed by Charles Meyer K4HQY (after retiring and moving from Milwaukee to Florida in 1966) and Mel Amidzich WA9PZU.
- 1976 - ARRL Central Division Convention held in Milwaukee, July 9 and 10, sponsored by the West Allis Radio Amateur Club. MRAC sponsors a hospitality suite on Friday evening, July 9.
- 1979 - West Allis Amateur Radio Club again sponsors a Central Division Convention at (what was the) Red Carpet Inn – June 15 and 16. MRAC Sponsors a hospitality suite the evening of June 15 (Friday).
- 1979 - MRAC adds a dinner to the annual Old Timers' Nite / Christmas Party to celebrate 60 years of affiliation with ARRL. ARRL Vice-President/General Manager (and future IARU President) Dick Baldwin W1RU ) attends along with Central Division Director Don Miller and Vice Director Ken Ebner. 125 members and visitors attend.
- 1979 - The Milwaukee Journal publishes a 6 page article (including the cover illustration) in its Sunday supplement section "*Insight*" on amateur radio. MRAC is prominently mentioned as well as some members and photos of some members.
- 1980 - MRAC "Old Timers Nite" (not yet called a Christmas party) on December 11, featured ARRL Vice President/General Manager (and future IARU President) Dick Baldwin W1RU (once again) as well as Acting Central Division Director, Ken Ebner K9EN, Director Elect, Edmond A. Metzger W9PRN, Wisconsin Section Communications Manager Roy Pederson K9FHI, , and former division Director Phil Haller W9HPG. The party continued the recent addition of a dinner for a cost of \$8.50 per person.
- 1983 - MRAC acts as QSL manager for Space Shuttle flight STS-9.
- 1983 - MRAC begins to administer amateur tests locally (as a Volunteer Examiner – VE) working under DeVry Institute of Technology, a VEC in Chicago.
- 1984 - MRAC goes into full operation as an independent Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC).
- 1986 - MRAC is QSL manager for Tony, W0ORE, on Space Shuttle Mission STS51-F.
- 1986 - MRAC operates a special event station at Polish Fest.
- 1994 - MRAC holds a special operating event for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ARRL affiliation (August 13).
- 1999 - The March MRAC meeting features Bart Jahnke W9JJ a Wisconsin native who works for the ARRL (among other duties, he is their VEC manager).
- 1999 - MRAC adds an email address for communicating with the board.

- 2000 - MRAC creates its own World Wide Web site.
- 2000 - MRAC VEC processes over 300 people in the first 4 months of the year in anticipation of license changes on April 15.
- 2000 - The MRAC newsletter begins being published in electronic form for email delivery to members with email capabilities. This has the potential of cutting some of the newsletter production costs which have been running greater than dues income for a number of years. It also may have helped bring some members into the computer age. Over the next few years all other area clubs go to electronic publishing of newsletters.
- 2001 – MRAC repeater has 3 times weekly code practice.
- 2002 - MRAC celebrates its 85th birthday with a special event station resulting in 534 contacts being made world-wide.
- 2003 - MRAC sponsors its first VHF/UHF FM Sprint contest. MRAC is the winner in the club category. By the way, the club had a VHF/UHF contest in February starting in 1950.
- 2003 - MRAC Repeater moves to another new location sharing space with receivers for other local repeaters and a Navy MARS repeater on the channel 18/10/36 TV tower (receive antenna at 730 feet, transmit antenna at 630 feet). MRAC provides an antenna and cavities for the community repeater project. Thanks to MATC/Channel 10/36 for the space, Skywave Tower Service for antenna work and Dave Karr, KA9FUR, WAR Frequency Coordinator and Dave Schank, KA9WXN, Engineer Channel 10/36 for their technical work getting things running. The repeater now has coverage from Sheboygan south to the Illinois border and west through Walworth, Waukesha, Washington County (with some holes in the center of Waukesha). Quite a change from Ed Wille's 50 foot tower. See complete story elsewhere in this document.
- 2003 - Tom Fuszard, KF9PU, one of the MRAC-VEC managers, is elected to the position of Chairman – National Council of VECs (NCVEC) at their annual meeting in Gettysburg, Pa. (7/03)
- 2004 - Tom Fuszard KF9PU is re-elected Chairman – National Council OF VECs (NCVEC) at their annual meeting in Gettysburg, Pa.
- 2005 - Tom Fuszard KF9PU is re-elected Chairman of the National Council of VECs (NCVEC) for a third (and he says final) term at their annual meeting in Gettysburg, Pa.
- 2005 - MRAC adds a Yahoo Group emailing list for members (October).
- 2005 - MRAC gets its own Internet domain name – [www.w9rh.org](http://www.w9rh.org) (October) and revised web page (December).
- 2005 - The community repeater site, which MRAC is a part of, goes online with 1200 Ahr battery backup (October).
- 2006 - The March meeting features guest speaker Gordon West WB6NOA. He was in town for Superfest beginning the next day. There were 71 people in attendance (including 18 who had never attended an MRAC meeting). The meeting was videotaped and DVD copies (with the addition of still pictures from the meeting) were created and made available. Pictures of the meeting are posted on the ARRL Wisconsin Section web site (thanks to Don Michalski W9IXG, Wisconsin Section Manager).
- 2007 - MRAC VEC lowers the fee for testing to \$5.00 (the lowest since the program began) due to a budget surplus (for the VEC only, not the club in general). Paperwork upgrades (as a result of the coming code test changes) are free.
- 2007 - Again the March meeting falls immediately prior to AES Superfest and as a result MRAC is able to have Gordon West return as a guest speaker this time also joined by ARRL Marketing Manager Bob Inderbitzen NQ1R. There were 54 people in attendance.
- 2007 - The test session at AES Superfest, March 31, had 100 people take a test for the largest turn out in MRAC VEC history. The large crowd was due to the recent rule change eliminating CW testing and Superfest being a popular event.

- 2008 - Once again, the March meeting of the club falls immediately prior to AES Superfest and the club is able to get a return appearance by Bob Inderbitzen NQ1R, Marketing Manager of ARRL (who is in town for Superfest).
- 2008 - At the March meeting Bob Inderbitzen NQ1R presented the club with a plaque from ARRL recognizing the contributions and longevity of MRAC (2009 will mark 90 years of ARRL club affiliation).
- 2009 - At the September meeting (featuring a presentation on mobile CW operating by Pat Hoppe WW9R) an unexpected visitor shows up, Harald (AI) Kjode, LA9SN from Norway. Harald also operates mobile CW using 1000 Watts!. He is also at the top of the DXCC Honor Roll, having worked 344 countries (there are 338 at this date). Harald happened to have a flash memory drive with him with a number of pictures of some of his one man DX-peditions which added another hour to our already excellent program.
- 2011 - MRAC attempts a Hamfest partnering with the Milwaukee Area Amateur Radio Society (MAARS), just like the Christmas party. Amazingly, it turns a profit in its first year based on more than 40 vendor tables and 220 tickets sold (about \$500 for each club).
- 2011 - Gordon West WB6NOA makes his third appearance at a MRAC meeting. This was because the March meeting fell immediately prior to AES Superfest again.
- 2011 - CQ Magazine sends a photographer (Larry Mulvehill WB2ZPI) to spend Field Day weekend with MRAC. Besides our Field Day operations, he also takes pictures of the community repeater site, WMVS and WMVT TV transmitters, and the Gateway Technical College Field Day operations (advised by MRAC's own Pat Hoppe WW9R). Pictures of WMVT TV transmitter with MRAC member and Director Dave Schank KA9WXN appear on the cover of the October 2011 issue of *Popular Communications* magazine. Two of the Field Day pictures as well as one picture from the Gateway Tech College Field Day and one picture from the community repeater site also with Dave Schank KA9WXN appear in the 2012 CQ Amateur Radio Calendar including the front cover. The cover image is also used in ads for the calendar over a number of months in numerous CQ publications.
- 2012 - The March MRAC meeting again falls immediately prior to AES Superfest which allowed Gordon West WB6NOA to make his fourth appearance at an MRAC meeting.
- 2012 - MRAC operates a special event HF station for its 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary during Superfest at Amateur Electronic Supply. The demo radios at the front of the store are offered for our use and the club table is also located there, making us the first thing people see when entering the store. 6 members as well as Gordon West operate the radios for 2 hours Friday and 6 hours Saturday making over 200 contacts with stations all over the world.
- 2013 - The CQ 2013-2014 calendar contains yet more pictures from the MRAC / MAARS Field Day of 2011 – 4 months and both the front and back covers.
- 2014 - MRAC is selected as one of about 100 test installations of the new Yaesu Fusion Digital Voice / Data Repeater. This is one of only 2 installations of a Yaesu Fusion system repeater in the state of Wisconsin. MRAC is also given a System Fusion HT and mobile radio by Yaesu for use with the repeater.
- 2014 - MRAC is involved in a high altitude balloon launch. The W9RH call is used on the APRS tracker aboard the balloon.